

## Written Testimony on Behalf of the Connecticut State Library (H.B. No. 5037)

February 16, 2022



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[ScovilleLibrary.org](http://ScovilleLibrary.org)

Dear Senator Osten, Representative Walker, and Appropriations Committee members:

I was very pleased to see that Governor Lamont's proposed budget sustains funding and services for the State Library. I strongly support the Governor's proposal and applaud the effort to support public libraries in Connecticut.

Libraries have always been an essential service, but it's never been more pertinent than it has been over the past two years. Libraries quickly adapted to maintain strong connections with their communities by providing, in most cases, uninterrupted access to the services people needed most during the pandemic. Librarians across the state began to do such things as create new library accounts, answer reference questions, and develop and deliver programming, all from their own homes. We provided home delivery of library materials, safe access via curbside pickup, kept our websites as a source of current and accurate health information, and assisted citizens with navigating and setting up vaccination appointments and tracking stimulus funding. We upgraded and expanded wi-fi for our communities, creating greater access for people as they also pivoted to work and attend school remotely.

The State Library is an integral partner and support system that provides libraries with valuable resources that enable us to do what we do even better. In small and rural libraries such as Scoville Memorial, we heavily rely on programs such as DeliverIt CT and BorrowIt CT to provide our patrons with a wider variety of materials than we can offer directly.

The Division of Library Development offers professional development opportunities for library staff, Board, and volunteers. They also provide expert consultation on a variety of library-related topics as well as administer grant opportunities that help us strengthen our infrastructure through affordable access to high-speed broadband and construction funds to expand and improve our buildings. They assisted libraries across the State in the allocation and expenditure of ARPA funds, and the Governor's Everybody Learns grant initiative. The Connecticut State Library is an invaluable resource.

Again, I thank the committee for maintaining State Library funding for this year and encourage all of you to continue to support the work in the years to come. I also encourage you to talk to your local librarians to hear stories of the impact they are creating in your communities.

Sincerely,

Karin Goodell, Library Director, Scoville Memorial Library  
Region 1 Representative, Connecticut Library Association